



2014

**COOPERATION, COLLABORATION, AND
CONSOLIDATION OF SERVICES PLAN**

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2012 Service Sharing Plan Update

Public Safety

- **Public Safety Division** – Beginning in 2010, the City of Monroe began a process to begin to utilize police officers as public safety officers. The primary goal of this process was to improve the City's ability to adequately respond to fire incidents. The staffing level of the Monroe Fire Department had been reduced from forty-one (41) in 2005 to nineteen (19) in 2011. Upcoming retirements were to further reduce staffing of the Fire Department.

The Police Officers were offered training in medical first response and fire suppression. In August 2011, thirteen (13) police officers were activated as public safety officers. Thirteen (13) additional police officers are currently being trained in fire suppression. It is expected that they will be activated as public safety officers in 2012. At the end of this training and implementation process, the City will have at least forty (40) personnel trained in fire suppression and at least thirty-three (33) personnel trained at the medical first responder level for emergency medical response. At least twelve (12) of those thirty-three (33) are trained as paramedics. All new hires must be trained as Public Safety Officers.

Estimated Cost Savings – As previously stated, the primary goal of using a public safety model was to improve the City's capability to respond to fire emergencies. The City had already achieved significant cost savings by reducing staffing at both the Police and Fire Departments. With that being said, a budget projection that was completed through June 30, 2015 estimates that annual operating costs for public safety may be reduced by up to \$180,000 if the staffing plan that was originally conceived is followed.

- **2013 Update** – The City is continuing with its process of converting to a public safety operation. There are currently twenty-seven (27) police officers trained in fire suppression. Five (5) more police officers are currently being trained. By May 2013, thirty-two (32) police officers will be considered public safety officers. In addition to their fire fighting capability, nine (9) police officers are currently licensed as medical first responders. The City still employs twelve (12) fire personnel plus the Fire Chief. In total, the City now has forty-five (45) personnel trained in fire suppression, a key goal of the adoption of the public safety model.

An EVIP grant was received that will cover training costs and equipment needs to continue to convert to the public safety operation. The grant totaled \$49,000.

The primary difficulty in converting to a public safety model has been filling vacant police positions that have occurred due to retirements. The City currently has five (5) vacant police positions. Issues with background investigations have been the primary problem with hiring new officers. The City also would like to replace an aging central fire station and

consolidate the two departments into one building. This will likely require a millage approval by citizens of the City of Monroe.

- **2014 Update** - The City is continuing with its process of converting to a public safety operation. There are currently thirty one (31) Public Safety Officers certified in both law enforcement and fire suppression. Two (2) additional Police Officers are currently in training and one (1) new hire is currently certified. By May 2014, there will be thirty-four (34) certified Public Safety Officers on staff. In addition to their fire fighting capability, fourteen (14) Public Safety Officers are licensed as Medical First Responders and three (3) additional Officers will be trained by April 2014. The City also employs eleven (11) Firefighter Paramedics plus the Fire Chief. In total, the City now has forty-six (46) personnel trained in fire suppression, a key goal of the adoption of the public safety model.

The primary barrier in converting to a public safety model continues to be filling vacant police positions that have occurred due to retirements. The City currently has four (4) vacant police positions. Issues with background investigations have been the primary problem with hiring new officers. We expect to have all four (4) positions filled by March 31, 2014. The City also would like to replace an aging central fire station and consolidate the two departments into one building. An architect recently completed a public safety building study. The location of the new building would require the City to acquire property currently owned by others. Acquisition of property and construction of the building are barriers to the best implementation and they will require a millage approval by citizens of the City of Monroe.

Information Technology

- **Fiber Optic Network** – The City of Monroe computer network currently extends from its base location in city hall to all of its outlying buildings. Some of the outlying buildings are connected back to city hall via slower connection methods, such as cable company connections and dsl services through the phone company. As software use has advanced, these connections have proven to be a problem in terms of the efficiency with which the new software programs can be used.

To solve this efficiency problem, the City of Monroe is planning to replace those slower connection methods with fiber optic cable. If the City of Monroe were to run this cable on its own, the cost would be significant and the route that the fiber would need to go would be difficult to achieve due to the need to bore underneath railroad tracks. Initial costs are estimated in the range of \$150,000.

To help to reduce cost and to provide for a more efficient means of getting fiber to each of the locations, the City of Monroe is in discussions with Monroe Public Schools regarding the possibility of using some fiber optic cable that the Schools already have in place to cover a large length of the route that the City needs. We would then run our own cable from where the school cable ends and splice the two together. This would reduce the installation cost

and eliminate the need to bore under railroad tracks, which would also eliminate a potentially lengthy and costly permit process with the railroad.

Estimated cost savings – the final cost savings will depend on the agreement negotiated with Monroe Public Schools. The cost savings could be in the \$80,000 to \$100,000 range.

- **2013 Update** – An agreement was reached with Monroe Public Schools to use some of their fiber. There is no initial capital cost with the agreement. The City will pay its prorated maintenance cost. Bids were received and approved for the entire project in the spring of 2012. The project has not been able to move forward at this time due to need for DTE to complete its make ready process for the pole attachment. It is expected that this process will be completed in January 2013 and the entire project will be completed by April 2013.
- **2014 Update** – DTE's work in getting the poles ready for fiber to be hung took much longer than anticipated. The fiber installation process began in July 2013 and is complete at this time except for final testing, including connection to and use of the school system's fiber. During the process of installing the fiber into city hall, it was determined that it would be better to coordinate the fiber installation with a network upgrade project that was to get started in fall 2013. It is expected that the fiber will be fully utilized beginning in April or May 2014. There are no real barriers to implementation.
- **Telephone System** – The City of Monroe has a telephone system that serves all but one of its buildings that is reaching ten (10) years of age. The phone system will likely need to be replaced in the next five (5) years due to its age and also to take advantage of new communication technologies that are available.

The City works closely with Monroe County as it relates to information technology. The City and the County are exploring the benefits of adding the City to the voice over internet protocol (VOIP) telephone system that the County currently has in place in some of its buildings. Some of the benefits that may be possible with this cooperation would be four digit dialing to all City and County buildings, technology to possibly eliminate City fax machines, reduced monthly cost for telephone services, and maintenance of the phone system by County IT personnel. The City's current phone system located in city hall is maintained by the Building Department. Departments in buildings outside city hall maintain their own phone systems. The project would also include an upgrade to the City's computer network infrastructure that would add efficiency and add wireless network connection capabilities inside city hall.

Estimated cost savings – Very preliminary estimates of the cost to implement the system are in the range of \$200,000 to \$260,000. The monthly savings to the City on its telephone service has not yet been determined. Whether the project will go forward in this manner will depend largely on the cost/benefit to the City. An estimate of the telephone service savings is expected to be available in January 2012.

- **2013 Update** – The project costs have been budgeted and a request to hire a consultant to evaluate options for replacing the phone system was made in January 2013. It is expected that the consultant will be hired and that portion of the process will be completed by the end of the first quarter of 2013. Once this process is completed we will decide whether to use the County system or keep the City system separate. The only barriers to the project have been the availability of time to commit to it and to gather the information needed to make a proper evaluation. The hiring of the consultant is expected to resolve those barriers.
- **2014 Update** – The consultant referred to was hired and an evaluation was made. It was determined that it likely is not cost effective for the City to use the County VOIP system. This project has been put on hold until a network upgrade project is completed in the spring/early summer of 2014. A final evaluation will be made at that point and bids will be requested for a new system. It is expected that the final solution will be installed by May 2015. There are no real barriers to implementation.

Recreation and Culture

- **Governmental Cable Channel** – The City of Monroe contracts with Monroe Public Access Cable Television (MPACT) for public access cable television. The City and MPACT will be expanding their relationship in 2012. MPACT will be responsible for the City's governmental channel operation and maintenance in its entirety. In exchange for this service, MPACT is receiving the remaining 1/3 of the public education funding the City receives from the cable companies operating within the City. The annual amount is expected to be approximately \$9,000.

Estimated cost savings – No cost savings is estimated from this collaboration. The collaboration provides the City with expertise in this area that it does not currently possess. For MPACT, the additional funding will help to maintain this function and to maintain some public school radio operations it has recently undertaken.

- **2013 Update** – This proposal was originally considered and discussed with MPACT in the summer of 2011. It was implemented in January 2012 and it is currently operating as explained. There were no barriers to its implementation.
- **2014 Update** – The agreement remains in effect as it was implemented in January 2012.

2013 Service Sharing Plan Update

Public Works

- **Traffic Signal Maintenance Division** – The City of Monroe has historically maintained all of the seven (7) City traffic signals with City Department of Public Service employees. Due to

current staffing changes, the City is having discussions with the Monroe County Road Commission regarding a possible contract where the Road Commission would be hired to perform traffic signal maintenance within the City of Monroe. The planning for this potential service sharing began in December 2012. If the parties are able to come to an agreement, it is expected that the service sharing plan could be implemented in the 2nd quarter of 2013 (April to June).

Estimated cost savings – If the City were to contract with the Road Commission to perform traffic signal maintenance within the City of Monroe, it is not expected to result in any significant cost savings to the City. The City would receive qualified staff that it currently does not possess to continue to provide the service to the citizens of the City. The Road Commission may see some financial benefit if they are able to do the work with presently employed staff and if they do the work primarily during regular hours vs. overtime.

- **2014 Update** – The City decided against entering into the agreement with the Road Commission and instead changed the management structure of our own Public Services Department without adding any additional employees to allow for the City to continue to maintain the service on its own and to better manage the department overall. A supervisor was hired with the skills and experience to allow the City to maintain the system on its own. There were no barriers to implementation. The City decided it was in its best interest to not implement the plan that was considered.

General Government

- **Treasurer Receipt and Deposit Process** – The City of Monroe Treasurer's Office is responsible for the collection, receipt, and deposit of all City funds. In addition to the elected Clerk/Treasurer position, the Treasurer function has normally employed a Deputy Treasurer and a Cashier. Due to a current vacancy in the Cashier position, the City is considering contracting with the Monroe County Community Credit Union (MCCCU) to perform the functions previously assigned to the Cashier. The MCCCU leases space in the Monroe City Hall and operates a branch at the location. The branch office is located directly across the hall from the Clerk/Treasurer's office. Part of the planning for this process has been done in the past, but it will be picked up again in the 1st quarter of 2013. It is expected that this proposal will be implemented in April 2013.

Estimated Cost Savings - The cost that could be eliminated from the City of Monroe's budget if the position is not refilled in favor of the contract with MCCU is approximately \$50,000. The estimated cost of the contract with the credit union will be in the \$35,000 to \$40,000 range.

- **2014 Update** – A contract was entered into with the MCCCU in March 2013. The MCCCU began its service under the contract on April 1, 2013. The savings and cost of the contract are the same as previously estimated. The contract will continue until either party terminates it. There were no significant barriers to implementation.

Land Use Planning

- **Planning for Resilient Communities-** The City has joined with Monroe Charter Township in a joint master planning effort managed by the Land Information Access Association (LIAA). The *Planning for Resilient Communities* project is a multi-jurisdiction planning assistance program developed by LIAA with assistance from the Michigan Municipal League (MML), Michigan Townships Association (MTA), Michigan Association of Planning (MAP), and Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning at the University of Michigan. A portion of the funding for this project is being provided by the Kresge and Americana Foundations, with local match commitments from the City and Township. The overall project mission is to adopt master plans in the participant communities that promote resilience in the face of rapid economic changes and increasing climate variability. It is expected that the project working agreements will be adopted in January and February 2013. The entire project is expected to be completed by June 2014.

Estimated Cost Savings- Both the City of Monroe and Monroe Charter Township are at the end of the five year cycle when state law required communities to review their master (a.k.a. comprehensive) plans. By working together with LIAA, the communities will not have to engage separate consultants and will be able to share in the benefit of the public outreach efforts, and development of educational materials, geographic analyses, and mapping that will be prepared jointly with LIAA's assistance.

2014 Update – Frenchtown Charter Township has also participated in this project. Frenchtown Charter Township will be using this study to inform area plans where the Township is adjacent to the City. The direct cost for all three jurisdictions is \$20,000; while separate consultant contracts would likely exceed that amount for each jurisdiction. Therefore, the cost savings is at least \$40,000. This project was implemented and is ongoing. It is still expected to be completed by June 2014. There have been no significant barriers to implementation.

Future Service Sharing Plan

Information Technology

- **Computer Network Disaster Recovery Planning** – The City of Monroe has identified the need to better secure its network backups and a general need to create a disaster recovery plan. The City of Monroe's network is connected to the Monroe County network and the City of Monroe received information technology support services and internet service through Monroe County. The Monroe County Emergency Management Division (EMD) building is located approximately five (5) miles west of city hall and is connected to the network via fiber optic cable. The City and the County are currently researching and discussing the possibility of having the City's network servers backed up to a server owned by the County and located at the EMD building. The City and County are also discussing

requesting a joint proposal to have a disaster recovery plan completed for each organization by the same consultant at the same time.

Estimated cost savings – Cost savings have not been estimated yet for the backup plan, but cost savings are expected. If the City were to do this on its own, it would likely require the purchase of its own server. We hope to lease space on a County server vs. purchasing our own. The cost savings will primarily be the difference between the server cost and the space lease cost. In addition, the backups wouldn't be as secure if the City did this on its own because the new server would have to be located in a location that is still very close to city hall, in most cases, less than ½ mile.

The disaster recovery planning process should generate some savings as well in that we are consolidating the proposal request process and hiring one consultant vs. two to do the work, which should generate some cost savings and efficiencies. The only way to know the true savings would be to request proposals on our own and with the County to see what the difference might be.

Community Development

- **River Raisin Battlefield Collaborative Preservation and Management Plan-** The project will develop collaborative preservation, maintenance and use of lands associated with the 1813 Battles of the River Raisin, currently held by individuals and local jurisdictions and identified in the River Raisin Heritage Corridor Master Plan (2013). The Corridor Plan is a transformative strategy, focusing on heritage tourism to make Monroe a national destination. However, the specifics of how the Plan will be implemented are unclear. This project will augment the programs and plans of the National Park, establishing the preservation of the battlefield for public use as central to the economic and cultural development of the area. The project includes research and inventory of properties; identification of landholding partners; plan for long-term collaborative interpretive land use and maintenance; inventory of current ordinances and policies affecting land planning use and management, and recommendations for their modification; and a template for a joint management agreement. This project brings together the City of Monroe, Monroe County, Frenchtown Charter Township, Monroe Charter Township, the Port of Monroe, the State of Michigan, the River Raisin National Battlefield Park Foundation, the Monroe County Historical Society, tribal groups, other organizations and private individuals as active partners in planning, acquiring, developing, maintaining and interpreting battlefield areas adjacent to the River Raisin National Battlefield Park. The Project started in 2013 with the development of the River Raisin Heritage Corridor Plan, and is anticipated to be implemented over the next several years.

Estimated Cost Savings- With collaborative planning and a joint management agreement in place, the public and private sector partners can work together to minimize duplication of efforts and leverage an economy of scale for management contracts such as landscape maintenance. Due to the fact the scope of work that will be included in the Plan and the joint management agreement(s) is still not well defined, it is difficult to estimate the cost

savings. The City of Monroe has already applied for a \$70,000 grant from the American Battlefield Protection Program to help develop and implement the Plan components.